

a1 a recess portion being provided in a center region of the tread, the center region extending in the tire circumferential direction with a width that is 50% of a maximum width (W) of tire ground contacting portion so as to be symmetrical with respect to the tire central plane of said tread;

wherein a negative ratio of the center region other than said lug groove is set to 10% to 25%.

a2 7. (Amended) A pneumatic tire according to claim 4, wherein a cross section in the tire radial direction of said lug groove bottom portion is inclined by substantially 80 degrees with respect to the tire central plane in a region having the width of 1/5 or more of a tread half width.

a3 10. (Amended) A pneumatic tire according to claim 4, wherein said auxiliary groove is at least one closed type groove portion that is sequentially formed in the tire circumferential direction at a land portion positioned between the adjacent lug grooves.

a4 12. (Amended) A pneumatic tire comprising:

a tread;

a lug groove extending from a shoulder side of said tread toward a tire central plane such that the end, on the central plane side, of each lug groove is aligned on the central plane, the lug groove being provided in plurality at said tread in the tire circumferential direction to form a lug pattern; and

ay a recess portion being provided in a center region of the tread, the center region extending in the tire circumferential direction with a width that is 50% of a maximum width (W) of tire ground contacting portion so as to be symmetrical with respect to the tire central plane of said tread;

wherein a depth of said recess portion is set to 10% to 45% of a maximum depth of said lug groove.

AS 17. (Amended) A pneumatic tire comprising:

a tread;

a lug groove extending from a shoulder side of said tread toward a tire central plane such that the end, on the central plane side, of each lug groove is aligned on the central plane, the lug groove being provided in plurality at said tread in the tire circumferential direction to form a lug pattern; and

a recess portion continuously provided in the tire circumferential direction on the tire central plane of said tread; and

a nother recess portion sequentially formed in the tire circumferential direction in a center region that extends in the tire circumferential direction with a width that is 50% of a maximum width (W) of tire ground contacting portion so as to be symmetrical with respect to the tire central plane of said tread;

wherein a negative ratio of the center region other than said lug groove is set to 10% to 25%.

Please add the following new claims:

Ab 21. (New) A pneumatic tire according to claim 1, wherein the end, on the central plane side, of each lug groove has a deeper depth than the recess portion.

22. (New) A pneumatic tire according to claim 12, wherein the end, on the central plane side, of each lug groove has a deeper depth than the recess portion.

23. (New) A pneumatic tire according to claim 17, wherein the end, on the central plane side, of each lug groove has a deeper depth than the recess portion.